



Press Kit

The What and Why of Smiling Albino



Smiling Albino was conceived to create highly original, tailor-made travel experiences that we'd proudly take our friends and family on. Founded in 2000 by Canadians, Scott Coates and Daniel Fraser, we've grown from our original base in Thailand to offer adventures in Cambodia, Vietnam, Nepal, Laos and Myanmar, bringing unique travel experiences to thousands of happy guests. Our bespoke trips are the result of continuous travel, innovation and refinement — combining multiple activities, incredible locations and world-class hosts. The signature of our experiences relies on the intimate relationships we've built with a huge network of people throughout the region, both in a professional and personal capacity, as well as through our social projects and work with local communities.

We don't just connect the dots, we create them, delivering unforgettable travel experiences.

The Founders

In September 1999 Daniel Fraser and Scott Coates left the comfortable confines of the marketing and media worlds in Canada to pursue a fantastic dream: to start an innovative travel company based on the ideals of fun and personal growth. Today, Smiling Albino (SA) is a premier choice for authentic, safe and enriching personalized adventures in Asia.

In 2013 Scott Coates left full-time operations at Smiling Albino and the team is now headed full-time in Bangkok by Daniel Fraser, and a team of Cultural Travel Enthusiasts who are passionate about what they do. Our growing travel enterprise has always stayed close to its roots: keeping travel fun, intimate and creative. With customized programs in Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Nepal and Myanmar, we only choose to grow in directions where we believe we can add value.



Daniel Fraser – *Co-founder and Director*

Daniel first came to Thailand in 1995 to teach English, but not like most foreigners do. He was invited by the very revered Thai Royal Family to teach at Chitralada Palace under the direction of HRH Princess Sirindhorn as part of a university program. From the moment he touched down in



the Land of Smiles he was in love. He went on to spend the next 16 months building contacts, learning all he could about the kingdom, its people and was hooked.

After graduating from Texas A&M with a degree in Commerce, he formally returned to Thailand and established Smiling Albino in 2000, leading the company as Director to this day – but it's far from his only passion.

When not designing the next big adventure, usually atop a Harley Davidson, Daniel can be found dabbling in a myriad of other areas. During his tenure in the region he's been a model, gracing the pages of magazines, featured in many television commercials and in 2004 co-starred in Thailand's first all digital film [The Garuda](#). His lines were in Thai and his performance received favorable reviews. A television presenter for the Tourism Authority of Thailand, he's regularly called upon to host programs about traveling the country, liaise as translator for visiting government officials and consult on tourism-related projects. He often serves as emcee at regional events and is a facilitator for a leading management training company.

Daniel, famous in Thailand for his Television show called [Long Krung](#), has recently started a new endeavour hosting a popular Thai national TV show called [Long Ruk Yim](#), a Thai-language series investigating unique sides of Thailand and its culture through the eyes of a resident Canadian.

There are simply not enough hours in the day for Daniel and he regularly trades hours sleeping for working in the office, blazing new trails and attending industry events.

His personality and enthusiasm for life and Asia are infectious. An hour with him and you're sure to be hooked.

What's with the Name?

The name Smiling Albino reflects both the origin and history of our company. Smiling Albino was born in Thailand, a country often referred to as the Land of Smiles after its endearingly friendly and hospitable population. Additionally, the name reflects something unique about Thailand's pageantry: white albino elephants have been given as gifts to Kings of Siam for centuries and have come to represent the sacred power, grandeur and glory of the Kingdom.



We have since grown to host adventures in many countries and our name still reflects the reverence that people in the region accord white elephants. The SA logo, has recently been updated, featuring an auspicious, stylized, white elephant set within a saffron-colored crest, was designed to establish a sense of fun and intrigue - core components of a Smiling Albino adventure.

Smiling Albino Key Messages

THE ONLY STATEMENT: SMILING ALBINO IS THE ONLY BESPOKE TOUR OPERATOR BASED IN THAILAND THAT SPECIALIZES IN UPSCALE, PRIVATE ADVENTURES THROUGHOUT SOUTHEAST ASIA.

Smiling Albino is known for its exciting brand of “luxury meets street-level experiences” in Southeast Asia.

Smiling Albino are specialists in designing high-touch custom travel programs that go from the ground up and deeper into the cultural heart of Southeast Asia. They seek to give clients street-side experiences such as local food, local modes of transport, and local engagement, but provide high quality support in terms of personable guides, unique accommodations, and exceptional planning.

For example, Smiling Albino clients can food stall-hop by tuk-tuk, meditate with a local community, stay in Bangkok's most luxurious hotels and then travel to rustic mountain lodges all during one seamless and well-choreographed trip.

With 80% of direct clients being repeat, or referral business it is clear that what they do works.

Smiling Albino is the foremost regional expert in Southeast Asia tourism.

Smiling Albino's well-rounded connections throughout Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar and Laos provide the backbone for behind-the-scenes travel experiences that make the seemingly impossible a reality. The signature of their trips rely on the intimate relationships they've built throughout the company's 15-year history in Southeast Asia, be it with artists, businesses, boutique hoteliers, chefs, award winning writers, organizations, galleries, art historians, musicians, celebrities, and more.

Originally from Canada, Smiling Albino Founder Daniel Fraser moved to Thailand in 1995 at the invitation of the very revered Thai Royal Family to consult at Chitralada Palace under the direction of HRH Princess Sirindhorn. He founded Smiling Albino in 1999, and his undeniable character, local friendships and in-depth destination knowledge have made him into a well-recognized travel authority and personality in Thailand.

Smiling Albino never outsources their trips to third parties.

Smiling Albino doesn't just connect the dots; they create them. This means that clients get access to hidden gems and unique journeys that you can't find anywhere else. Smiling Albino knows they are offering the best of Southeast Asia because they have personally experienced it all – and then some. The team has scouted every area, ate at each restaurant, sourced and trained every guide/host, slept in every hotel bed, rode the bikes, boarded the boats, and scratched the elephant's ears. This hands-on and personalized approach ensures that every Smiling Albino adventure is highly original, well thought out, oozing value, and impossible to duplicate.

Smiling Albino is committed to responsible tourism.

Smiling Albino's small scale, community-driven tourism helps to preserve the environments in which they explore. Being socially aware foreigners and active members of the local community has opened a variety of social opportunities for Smiling Albino. Currently they sponsor the Angkor Hospital for Children Tuk-Tuk Program, employing their exceptional tuk-tuk driver, Mr. Sophoan, to drive kids to and from the hospital in Siem Reap. Smiling Albino also sponsors scholarships for students in Mae Sariang, Thailand with the Samsara Foundation.

Smiling Albino runs their Bangkok office in a responsible manner by reducing energy and paper usage, and providing ongoing training in the principles and practices of responsible travel, both to office staff and those employed directly around South East Asia.

Contacts:

Bangkok Office (GMT+7): **+662 107-2542** Skype: smilingalbino

General inquiries: info@smilingalbino.com For Travel Agents: agents@smilingalbino.com

For Media inquiries: media@smilingalbino.com

Smiling Albino Ltd. 55, 57 Ramkamheng Road, Soi 24 Yeak 34, Huamark, Bangkok, Bangkok 10240, Thailand

See a different part of the world, differently.